

Non-Native Invasive Species

Invasive species spread from manmade settings (gardens, agricultural areas, etc.) into the wild. Once in the wild, invasive species can reproduce virtually unchecked and displace native species, which can result in forest ecosystems that lack plant diversity. Native wildlife also suffers due to lack of preferred plants for food and shelter.

Our natural ecosystems are very complex. Native species of plants have well-established relationships with other native species, as well as native wildlife, which have evolved over time. These relationships ensure that native plant populations are kept in balance with the rest of the natural world. Invasive species, on the other hand, do not have any natural herbivores, parasites or diseases to keep them in check in our natural areas. Because of this, invasive species reproduce rapidly, displacing native plants and negatively affecting the many wildlife populations that depend on the native plants for food and shelter. In worst-case scenarios, invasive species disrupt the function of the entire ecosystem and change the character of the region by altering important processes like fire, nutrient flow and stormwater management.

Avoid Planting Invasive Species There are many tools to consider when trying to manage the problem of invasive species. The best way to start is to avoid planting the invasive species at all. Before changing the landscaping in your yard or common areas shared with neighbors, please make sure to select plants that are not on the [City's invasive plant list](#). You can also explore additional resources to identify plants that are known invasive species in this area.

Invasive.org

[U.S. Forest Service Invasive Species Program](#)

[Maryland State Invasive and Noxious Weed List](#)

[Weeds Gone Wild Alien Plant Invaders of Natural Areas](#)

City of Rockville's Invasive Plant Management Program The City is trying to manage invasive species that have already escaped into the wild. We are in the beginning stages of developing an invasive plant management plan for our park system.

What Rockville Citizens Can do to Help: Join the efforts of the Montgomery County Weed Warrior program. The [Montgomery County Weed Warrior](#) program's goal is to educate citizens about identification and management of non-native invasives (NNIs). Weed Warriors are trained to focus on 17 of the worst invasive plants in the Montgomery County area and are taught proper methods for manual pulling and clean up strategies. By partnering with Montgomery County, the City can use an already existing and successful model for the remediation of NNIs. Residents will be certified under the existing Montgomery County Weed Warrior program and can then [work in Rockville City parks](#) to manually remove NNIs. City staff will also schedule guided pulls twice a year for residents who are interested in a group pull and for residents interested in pulling NNIs but do not have the desire to become a certified Weed Warrior.